

The Nature of Industrial Marketing Work

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The Nature of Industrial Marketing Work

Industrial Marketing Management Special Issue Call for Papers

A central tenant of the interaction and business network approach is work. The concept of networks is accordingly one that simultaneously emphasises both ‘net’ and ‘work’. That is, industrial marketers carry out important work both within their firm and their wider business networks that perform and transform the markets. The focus on work in this special issue therefore reflects an important and traditional emphasis by industrial marketing scholars as well as engaging with the ‘turn to work’ perspective that has gained considerable traction in the broader management fields recently (Barley and Kunda, 2001; Phillips and Lawrence, 2012; Okuysen et al, 2015). Reviews of recent marketing literature reveal an increasing move towards an explicit focus on a work-based approach to studying industrial markets and marketing exchanges (Azimont and Araujo, 2010; Finch and Geiger 2012; Palmer et al, 2015; Palmer et al 2016). The ‘work turn’ can be observed across the broader management disciplines. For example, boundary-work (Gieryn, 1983), work as talk (Gronn, 1983), translation work (Latour, 1992), identity work (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010), and institutional work (Lawrence, Leca and Zilber, 2013), have all become important research avenues in recent years.

The purpose of this special issue is to bring together key research in the industrial marketing management field that can help show the nature of industrial marketing work. Phillips and Lawrence (2012) provide a useful summary review of the nature of work. They argue that these forms of work all involve actors engaged in a purposeful effort to manipulate some aspect of their social context. We invite papers that explicitly examine the underpinnings of industrial market work. Our aims are threefold:

First, we invite studies that extend recent efforts to explore the nature of work in industrial marketing. Papers that build on and extend studies relating to ‘customer planning tool work’ (Moon et al, 2000), ‘sales work’ (Darr, 2011), ‘quality standards work’ (Fergusson, 1996) ‘segmentation and positioning work’ (Harrison and Kjellberg, 2010), ‘inscription work’ (Simmons, Palmer, and Truong, 2013), ‘classification device work’ (Azimont and Araujo, 2010), ‘objectification work’ (Finch and Geiger 2012), ‘institutional maintenance work’ (Palmer et al, 2015), and ‘institutional boundary work’ (Palmer et al 2016) are but a partial list.

Second, the nature of work not only concerns its content but also the context in which individual industrial marketing actors act and interact with others (Okuysen et al, 2015). Therefore we aim to understand more on the context dynamics of work in industrial marketing settings. We encourage studies that extend recent efforts to explore how industrial marketers purposefully and strategically expend effort to affect contexts, including but not limited to network, market, social-symbolic, innovation and business

model contexts. Industrial marketing contexts such as sequenced projects (Ojansivu, Alajoutsijärvi and Salo, 2013), outsourced projects (Bhalla and Terjesen, 2013), supplier workshops (Palmer, 2015) and temporary spatial clusters (Palmer et al, 2016), also bring the nature of industrial marketing work more clearly into focus.

Third, we encourage research that connects macro-pressures with micro-processes and practice that occur in the everyday work of the industrial marketer. We explicitly encourage studies that connect with new and old industrial marketing work practice and how technology and institutions such as family, government, trade and professional associations, marketing fashions and other macro pressures influence the work of the industrial marketing actors (Tunisini, Bocconcelli and Pagano, 2010; Palmer et al, 2016).

In the current era, industrial marketing is moving outwards to engage with other social science disciplines, just as these other disciplines are moving inward to engage with industrial marketing work. These aims seek to inspire more nuanced understandings and discussions of industrial marketing as a set of work relationships, processes and practice. In pursuing this aim we are interested in bringing forward a *turn to work* perspective, through a consideration of the multiple forms of work. In doing this, we hope to illustrate that such bridging moves can enrich both industrial marketing and the other disciplines to which it bridges. We would particularly welcome research, conceived in a variety of industrial settings, which consider the any of the following themes:

- Buying and selling work
- Strategic initiative work
- Routine and non-routine industrial marketing work
- Industrial branding work
- Standardisation work
- Ideal and/or typical industrial marketing work
- Vocabularies of industrial marketing work
- Boundary work between sales, finance, technology, R&D, senior management team and so on.
- Labelling and categorizing work in new technology fields
- Work as cognitive, regulative and normative configurations
- Artefact work
- Marketing tool work - for example, models, analytics, evaluation, planning, quality standards, compliance
- Business modelling and innovation work
- Technology and digital work
- Project work
- Processes, patterns, practice, momentum, flow and spaces of industrial marketing work

The above list of themes is not limitative. Scholars are encouraged to submit manuscripts which go beyond the list but take a ‘work turn’ perspective on industrial marketing management. Both empirical studies and conceptual work will be considered. We are particularly interested in manuscripts which assess the impact of macro-factors (at the market or industry level) on

micro-processes (at the individual work level) that lead to macro-outcomes (organisational performance or market and non-market advantage). Such a perspective will highlight the importance of work in connecting an organisation's environment to its outcomes.

Submission deadline is September 30th 2017. Send your paper and cover letter as MSWord attachments to the Guest Editors with a copy to the IMM Editor.

Guest Editors

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